

**Kessler, Ellen**

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**From:** Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC [Stephanie.Strength@wdc.usda.gov]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 14, 2009 3:09 PM  
**To:** Lilley, Bliss  
**Cc:** Collins, Carly  
**Subject:** FW: CapX2020 and Rice County, MN  
**Attachments:** Microsoft Word - capx mike letter.doc.pdf; ATT00001.txt

-----Original Message-----

From: mikeb@integra.net [mailto:mikeb@integra.net]  
Sent: Friday, July 10, 2009 6:01 PM  
To: Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC  
Subject: CapX2020 and Rice County, MN

**I-111-001**

This federal scoping process is specific to only the Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse 345-kV project. As such, we have forwarded you comments to the project team dealing with the project with which you have raised concerns.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

July 9, 2009

Dear Ms. Strength,

I am writing to inform you of a potential threat to aviation safety in our home state of Minnesota.

You are aware of the CapX2020 proposal to place 345-kV high power transmission lines from South Dakota to Hampton, MN.

Just last week I was informed that the proposed alternate route through Rice County, MN has been changed from 57<sup>th</sup> Street in Webster Township to 50<sup>th</sup> Street.

I want to make it clear that I am not for the option of 57<sup>th</sup> Street as an alternate route, as it disrupts a serene, rural area, cuts through valuable crop and grazing land, and needlessly destroys vibrant natural habitat. All of which were valued and deemed a priority in the Countywide Comprehensive Plan adopted by Rice, Scott and Dakota Counties in 2002.

The 50<sup>th</sup> Street option bears the same criteria, but additionally places the over 70 aircraft at Minnesota's busiest airport community in grave danger. The proposed nearly 200' transmission lines on 50<sup>th</sup> Street would be placed *directly in the airport traffic pattern, only 1/2 mile from the end of the runway*. To further compound the problem, these lines exist in complete, and total conflict with the designated emergency landing field. In the event of an engine failure on takeoff, (the most likely place for an engine to fail), there is only one way to turn, due to the aggressively rolling terrain in the other direction. Note that this is exactly where the proposed power lines would be installed.

Sky Harbor Airport is a chartered and authorized emergency-use airfield, used by MEDEVAC flights and law enforcement organizations, and the lines would gravely endanger the use of public equipment and lives.

Please help us stop this critical aviation safety threat. There are many documented and deadly aviation power line incidents recorded in the NASA ASRS aviation safety program. Stop this dangerous proposal before we add another incident from a local Minnesota airfield.

Sincerely,

Mike Balfany, Lt Col (ret) USAF  
3720 50<sup>th</sup> Street  
Webster, MN 55088  
horsefly@integra.net  
952-652-2786